

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 482

By Massey

A RESOLUTION to commend Deputy Commissioner and Chief Policy Advisor Paul D. Degges for his honorable and astute service to the State of Tennessee on the occasion of his retirement.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should specially recognize those estimable public servants who have dedicated themselves to improving the quality of life for their fellow citizens; and

WHEREAS, one such individual is Paul D. Degges, who has evinced the greatest integrity and probity during his time as Deputy Commissioner and Chief Policy Advisor for the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT), from which position he is taking his much-deserved retirement; and

WHEREAS, after working seasonally for TDOT as a college student in 1986-1987, Mr. Degges began his full-time career with the organization in 1988 as an engineer in training, thereafter ascending to the post of manager of hydraulic design section (structures) in 1994, assistant director of the Construction Division in 1998, Region 3 division director in 2000, and assistant chief engineer in 2003; and

WHEREAS, beginning in 2004, Paul Degges served TDOT as deputy commissioner and chief engineer, overseeing the design and implementation of all of the department's highway engineering projects through the management of the activities of eleven divisions and four regional offices, and he was responsible for the work product of more than 4,000 employees; and

WHEREAS, in addition to being responsible for the entirety of Tennessee's 1,360 miles of freeways and 13,884 state highways, as well as the bridges, rest areas, welcome centers,

weigh stations, bicycle lanes, and sidewalks attendant to them, his duties have also included oversight of the State's airport and rail systems; and

WHEREAS, Deputy Commissioner Degges has overseen the awarding of more than 7,000 contracts with a construction value of more than \$18 billion; he has also worked closely with appointed and elected officials on the state and national levels in formulating transportation policy; and

WHEREAS, in August 2022, Deputy Commissioner Degges was appointed to serve as TDOT's Chief Policy Advisor; he served concurrently as vice chairman of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Council on Highways and Streets; and

WHEREAS, highly regarded in his profession, Paul Degges has served as a board member of the National Center for Pavement Preservation and a member of the Research and Technology Committee of the United States Federal Highway Administration; and

WHEREAS, he has presented extensively in his field, sharing his expertise in testimony before the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the United States Senate; in a presentation on asset management to the Korean Ministry of Land, Transport, and Maritime Affairs and the Korean Expressway Corporation in Seoul, South Korea; and in a presentation on pavement management to the Japan Ministry of Construction and the Japan Road Contractors Association in Tokyo, Japan; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to honors and accolades, Paul Degges has received the Tennessee Society of Professional Engineers (Nashville Chapter) Engineer of the Year Award, the AASHTO President's Special Award of Merit, the American Society of Highway Engineers Robert E. Pearson/Person of the Year Award, the Tennessee Technological University Engineer of Distinction Award, and the American Society for Public Administration Tennessee Administrator of the Year Award, to name but a few; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Degges is a licensed engineer and holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering from Tennessee Technological University, as well as certificates from the University of Tennessee's Tennessee Government Executive Institute and Lipscomb University's Spark Idea Center Leadership Institute; and

WHEREAS, his many accomplishments aside, Paul Degges is grateful for the love and support of his wife, Sandra, with whom he lives in Williamson County, and their two children and two grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, throughout his exemplary tenure in State government, Mr. Degges has distinguished himself as a public-spirited citizen of the highest order and as an exceptional asset to this State; and

WHEREAS, his remarkable success as a public servant and civic leader is directly attributable to his reliance on the time-honored values of hard work and common sense and his uncommon ability to work well with people from all walks of life; and

WHEREAS, Paul Degges is wholly committed to the noble precepts of public service that have earned Tennessee recognition as the Volunteer State, and he should be specially recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby commend Deputy Commissioner and Chief Policy Advisor Paul D. Degges for three and one-half decades of astute service with the Tennessee Department of Transportation and wish him all the best in his retirement.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.